

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 11873

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE FROM SHOESMITH

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, HK
SUBJECT: CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 215517

1. WE CERTAINLY WOULD BE PLEASED TO AGAIN HOST THE CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE. WITH THE BENEFIT OF LAST YEAR'S EXPERIENCE, I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN HANDLE THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTIC ARRANGEMENTS SATISFACTORILY, ALTHOUGH I WOULD WELCOME ANY SUGGESTIONS FROM YOU OR OTHER PARTICIPANTS AS TO HOW THOSE MIGHT BE IMPROVED UPON.

2. I AGREE WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE BE SCHEDULED FOR THREE DAYS TO PERMIT MORE TIME FOR DISCUSSIONS IN THE PLENARY SESSIONS, AS WELL AS EASE THE PRESSURES ON SCHEDULING INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS AND OUTSIDE REQUESTS FOR MEETINGS WITH APCAC REPRESENTATIVES AND WITH SOME OF THE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS WHO UNDOUBTEDLY WILL WISH TO MEET WITH YOU AND SOME OF THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS.

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3. I SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO SCHEDULE THE CONFERENCE SOMETIME DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS IN JANUARY IT WOULD BE MUCH APPRECIATED BY MANY ON THIS END WHO LOOK FORWARD TO BEING TOGETHER FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE WITH THEIR CHILDREN OR OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES VISITING THEM DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS. I REALIZE THAT YOUR SCHEDULE AND THAT OF

OTHERS IN WASHINGTON WHOM YOU MAY WISH TO PARTICIPATE
MAY PRECLUDE A LATER DATE, BUT I DID WANT TO BRING THIS
CONSIDERATION TO YOUR ATTENTION.

4. I THOUGHT THAT LAST YEAR'S FORMAT, FOCUSING ON
SPECIFIC ISSUES OF POLICY FORMULATION/IMPLEMENTATION
AND DEVELOPMENTS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE, RATHER THAN
ON INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS, WAS EXCELLENT AND
HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE. I THINK, HOWEVER, THAT ONCE AGAIN
JAPAN, KOREA AND CHINA, TOGETHER WITH ASEAN, MERIT
SOME SEPARATE DISCUSSION IN VIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANCE
FOR THE REGION AS A WHOLE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN AND OUR
POLICIES TOWARD THESE AREAS. IT MIGHT ALSO BE WORTHWHILE
TO DO A BIT OF BRAINSTORMING CONCERNING THE IMPLICATIONS
OF DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA (NOTABLY THE SINO-VIETNAMESE
CONFRONTATION, THE POSSIBILITY--IF IT IS NOT BY THEN
ALREADY A FACT--OF VIETNAM ACHIEVING A DOMINANT POSITION
IN CAMBODIA, AND SINO-SOVIET COMPETITION IN SOUTHEAST
ASIA) FOR OUR POLICIES IN THE REGION AS WELL AS TOWARD
THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA. I ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO
A SESSION ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE,
INCLUDING AN UPDATE ON THE EXCELLENT PRESENTATION WHICH
ERLAND AND JACK SULLIVAN MADE LAST YEAR OF OUR ECONOMIC
STRATEGY FOR THE REGION, AND WHATEVER CAN BE SAID ABOUT
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A QUOTE NATIONAL EXPORT POLICY UNQUOTE,
PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO OFFICIAL POLICIES AND LAWS
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WHICH MANY BUSINESSMEN OVERSEAS REGARD AS DISINCENTIVES
TO INVESTMENT OR CONSTRAINTS ON THEIR COMPETITIVENESS.
FINALLY, IF TIME PERMITS, I THINK IT WOULD BE USEFUL
TO HAVE PERHAPS AN HOUR FOR REVIEW/DISCUSSION LED BY
JIM MORAN AND/OR A RANKING REPRESENTATIVE FROM M OF
DEVELOPMENTS IN THAT AREA LIKELY TO AFFECT THE AVAILABILITY
OF RESOURCES TO OUR POSTS AND THE WELFARE OF OUR STAFFS.

5. I FOUND THAT ONE OF THE MOST USEFUL ASPECTS OF LAST
YEAR'S CONFERENCE WAS THE IN-DEPTH INSIGHTS PROVIDED
BY YOU AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXCELLENT TEAM
YOU BROUGHT FROM WASHINGTON INTO THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING
THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR POLICIES
TOWARD EAST ASIA. I AM INCREASINGLY OF THE VIEW
THAT MUCH OF THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND FRUSTRATION WITH
OUR POLICIES BEING EXPRESSED IN ASIA REFLECTS AN
IMPERFECT APPRECIATION OF THE REALITIES--POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL; INTERNATIONAL AS WELL
AS DOMESTIC--WHICH PLACE CONSTRAINTS ON AND GIVE NEW
DIRECTIONS TO THE DEFINITION OF OUR POLICY OBJECTIVES
IN EAST ASIA AND THE MANNER IN WHICH WE MUST ATTEMPT
TO ACHIEVE THEM. THE RESULT IS PERSISTENTLY UNREALISTIC

EXPECTATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND MISPERCEPTIONS AS
TO OUR INTENTIONS. OUR DISCUSSIONS AT LAST YEAR'S
CONFERENCE WERE MOST HELPFUL TO ME IN OBTAINING AT FIRST
HAND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE QUOTE REALITIES
UNQUOTE AND, HOPEFULLY, IN CONVEYING TO OTHERS SOME
SENSE OF THEIR RELEVANCE. IN THIS CONTEXT, I WOULD
HOPE THAT YOUR TEAM WOULD INCLUDE SOMEONE WITH AN
INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONGRESSIONAL SCENE AND
THE EFFORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO WORK WITH CONGRESS
IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN POLICY. I DO HOPE THAT
DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER WILL BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE;
HIS PRESENCE WOULD BE A REAL PLUS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE
CONFERENCE IN THIS CONNECTION AS WELL AS IN MANY OTHER
RESPECTS.
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6. BEST REGARDS.
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